

Reviews

Bourke, P., S. Brockwell and C. Frederickson (eds), *Darwin Archaeology: Aboriginal, Asian and European Heritage of Australia's Top End*. Charles Darwin University Press, Darwin, 2005; vi + 106 pages; paperback; ISBN 1 876248 98. \$34.95.

Archaeological and anthropological research in Australia's Top End began as early as the 1920s, and has continued sporadically ever since. The aim of this book is to unite the previously uncoordinated research into a more coherent framework by presenting contemporary research in the Darwin area. The time period covered spans c. 4000 BP up to the Second World War, and the geographical area generally includes land and seas within about 25 kilometres of the city of Darwin. All of the contributors are present or past staff and students at Charles Darwin (formerly Northern Territory) University.

The first three papers deal with mounds and middens from the late Holocene period. Brockwell builds on the work of Betty Meehan and others by analysing earth mounds on the western margins of the Adelaide River floodplains, to explore the consequences of environmental change in the area for past human populations. Using a combination of archaeological, geomorphological and chronological data, she identifies evolving patterns in resource utilisation in estuarine and freshwater environments. Hiscock uses an excavation of the Bayview Haven 3 shell midden to address a range of issues relating to the initial, or 'exploratory', phase of archaeological inquiry in the Darwin area. These issues include the anthropogenic nature of materials, chronological frameworks, site formation, sampling, and the environmental context of variations in human behaviour. Bourke describes the results of excavations at large shell mounds and middens that were formed mainly from around 2000 to 500 BP. She interprets the mounds, and exotic stone artefacts within them, as having a ceremonial role, perhaps as markers or monuments in the landscape where neighbouring groups gathered, took advantage of the abundant *Anadara* cockles, and exchanged goods and genes.

Mitchell expands the growing literature on the archaeology of the Chinese in Australia, with his survey of the Bynoe Harbour tin mining sites. Located southwest of Darwin, the mines were most intensively worked from 1904 to 1907. The 'poor man's show' at Bynoe has interesting parallels with Lawrence's 'poor man's [gold] diggings' in Victoria, where operations were small in scale, with little or no machinery, yet paid a living until yields declined and the community drifted away. The Bynoe Harbour sites are generally much smaller, and have much less surface material, than the Pine Creek sites, also in the Northern Territory, recorded by McCarthy in the 1980s. Mitchell suggests that the brief period of occupation offers a much finer scale of temporal resolution of Chinese material than available elsewhere in the Darwin hinterland. The archaeological material could also be used to explore the maintenance of Chinese ethnic identity at a time of economic decline, community hostility and political opposition to 'non whites'.

Fredericksen's paper on the Fannie Bay Gaol is in two parts. In the first he theorises a 'masculinist frontier' and men's material culture as a basis from which to explore male-oriented society in the Northern Territory. Perhaps a more robust critique of both 'frontier' theory and male-dominated historicism would have added both to the paper and to a gendered Australian archaeology. In the second part he develops the model using excavated material from the single

men's quarters at the gaol, a building constructed in 1883 to house unmarried prison guards. His account provides some insight into the material culture of a group (prison wardens) otherwise little known, but it would also have been useful to know if the building was used for preparing and eating meals or just for sleeping and socialising, as this helps interpret the material refuse encountered. In addition, the actual reasons for the excavation, other than as a student exercise, appear somewhat post hoc. In the end, Fredericksen acknowledges that isolating a 'male material culture' is almost impossible in spite of all that is known historically about the gaol.

Steinberg uses the historic shipwreck *Brisbane* (wrecked in 1881) to examine the relationships between archaeology, heritage, marine environments and aesthetics. He links the activities of divers and other visitors to their experience of the wreck and their appreciation of notions of 'wilderness' and 'antiquity'. The natural and cultural values of the site have become entangled, not only as the wreck is slowly reclaimed by the reef on which it ran aground, but in how visitors respond to the site and its natural values.

The final two papers contribute to a newly emerging area of archaeological research: aviation archaeology. Jung has investigated the remains of two Catalina flying boats wrecked in Darwin Harbour in 1942. Using wreck features, site formation processes and historical records, he attempts to specify the identities of the aircraft, and argues that this approach can and should be used to determine the fate of all of Darwin's historic World War II flying boats. De La Rue surveyed and excavated at Livingstone Airfield, 50 kilometres south of Darwin, used intensively in 1942–1943 for defence against the Japanese. Threatened with neglect, regrowth and infrastructure development, the airfield features a landing strip and drum arrangements used as gun emplacements. He argues that such places must be regarded as part of 'tactical landscapes' created for prosecuting the 'Battle of North Australia'.

Overall, the editors are to be commended for this well-produced volume. It covers a wide range of archaeology, including indigenous, historical, maritime and military, although, surprisingly, there is no paper on the Macassans. Photos, maps, tables and diagrams are clear and well chosen. Typos are few and minor. The volume reveals to me (from the Deep South) the real diversity of archaeological activity in the Darwin area and its potential to explore relationships between Australians of Aboriginal, European and Asian descent. The one thing I would have really liked to see (perhaps in the Introduction) was more explanation about the context of archaeology in the region, in terms of legislation, heritage management and the extent of academic vs. 'public' archaeology.

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Given, M., *The Archaeology of the Colonized*. Routledge, London, 2004; ix + 187 pages; paperback; ISBN 0-415-36992-4. US\$35.

This book might almost have been titled 'the archaeology of tax evasion'—a central motif in Given's study because he argues that the struggle over agricultural surplus lies at the heart of the colonial experience. He begins with an evocative

account of tithing threshed grain to show that:

this is where the experience of being colonized really comes home ... The most direct involvement of ordinary people with imperial rule is when their hard-won food is removed from in front of them and taken right out of their family, their community, and often their country... Tribute begins at the threshing-floor (p.3).

Unlike another recent archaeological study of colonisation, Chris Gosden's *Archaeology and Colonialism* (2004), which seeks to develop a global and longitudinal theory of this historical process, Given reverses the 'top down' analytical flow to examine the experience of colonised peoples, as far as it can be reconstructed, from 'specific situations and actual places'. His definition of the colonised is unusually broad, extending beyond those ruled from another country—as emphasized within recent postcolonial theorising of the European imperialism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—to include those 'ruled by a group they see as being alien' (p.4).

The book's theoretical framework (Chapter 2) is built around four concepts: resistance, agency, landscape and narrative. Given acknowledges problems with the concept of resistance—its imposition of a determinist binary opposition upon colonisers and colonised, its ubiquity and therefore over-generalisation, and especially, its valorisation of one form of response to colonisation among many. Nonetheless, he employs the term to refer to a broad range of activities, from overt and deliberate rebellion, to isolated acts of defiance such as tax evasion, through to 'unconscious patterns' of behaviour. Understanding these responses requires us to seek out hidden practices with correlates in the material record, and so Given reverses his orientation from the traditional archaeological emphasis on elite structures and action to search for secret acts and places, which he argues are available through a landscape approach combined with evidence for daily practices. The second pillar of his theoretical approach is the goal of restoring the agency of the oppressed: 'We may not know the names and faces of the Cypriot women sieving grain at night, or the Egyptian family bringing its wheat to the state granary, but we can still reconstruct their real, bodily experiences in the localities they have made meaningful' (p.13). Given argues that archaeological evidence is central to understanding the active role of the colonised: only by establishing patterns of life across a landscape, however, is sufficient context available to discern exceptions and anomalies.

Given pleads for engaging and vivid forms of archaeological narrative, in which readers may identify with historical actors, so that '[t]hey become agents, not blobs' (p.22). Although the book does not itself constitute 'large-scale storytelling', confining itself to brief fictional passages juxtaposed with more conventional academic accounts, Given aims to embody past lives and engage the reader in that process. Chapters open with short fictional evocations of experiences such as traveling along a road in the Roman provinces of Asia Minor that manifest some of the more abstract processes outlined. To my mind, this is the most innovative and compelling aspect of the book: we often lament the lack of appealing stories based on archaeological evidence, and here Given has been bold enough to animate his academic analysis through these experimental archaeological tales.

Chapter 3, 'The archaeology of taxation', presents a case study of the olive oil crop in southern Cyprus in the Late Bronze Age, examining the material culture of taxation such as threshing floors, storage facilities and grain stamps. 'Settlement of Empire' (Chapter 4) examines the impact of imperial control on the landscape through traces of

communication, settlement patterns and land use in the Roman provinces of Asia Minor (Anatolia), asking 'what did it mean to travel on ... a new Roman road, or see a temple dedicated to the Roman emperor dominating the skyline of your city?' (p.50). His fine-grained, bottom-up approach provides fascinating insights into the process of becoming a province, and the disjunction between colonisers' and local expectations: for example the famous Roman metalled roads were useless for lightly-shod animals, or could become bandit magnets.

In 'Living between lines' (Chapter 5) Given turns to late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Cypriot villagers living under British colonial rule; exclusion from their traditional grazing lands prompted widespread opposition expressed in trespassing, refusal to pay taxes, or even arson. Forced labour is the subject of 'The dominated body' (Chapter 6) through a comparison of processing grain tax in Roman Egypt, the construction of the monuments of Nazi Germany, and the pyramids at Giza in Old Kingdom Egypt. Given's disquieting account of the 'bloodied stones' of concentration camp quarries effectively shows how bodies may be alienated from their labour; by contrast, pyramid labourers appear to have been provided with reasonable conditions, and some chose to be buried with symbols of their work, successfully incorporated into the apparatus of the state.

Returning to Cyprus, Saint Mamas the patron saint of tax evaders is the focus of Chapter 7, where Given examines the evidence for secret crop-growing and processing in the form of archaeological remains such as remote threshing floors and pitch kilns that aimed to evade colonial administration. The final chapter, 'Landscapes of resistance' (Chapter 8) examines the everyday resistance of Scottish highlanders to land clearances and agricultural improvements of the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries. Archaeological evidence (by contrast to written records) shows not passive acquiescence but a range of responses such as the illicit whisky stills of Loch Lomond. This is an accessible and thoughtful book that grounds a suite of theories through richly substantive case studies. It deserves to be widely read by archaeologists concerned with colonisation, narrative and postcolonial theory.

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Lawrence, S. (ed.), *Archaeologies of the British: explorations of identity in Great Britain and its colonies, 1600–1945*. Routledge, London, 2003; 352 pages; hardback; ISBN 0415217008. US\$110.25.

Archaeologists have been interested in social identity for many years, and, within recent years, several historical archaeologists have attempted to examine social identity through the lenses of gender, class, ethnic affiliation and even race. Rarely have historical archaeologists examined what we might term 'politico-national' identity. The authors of this collection fill this lacuna in an admirable fashion.

The focus on the identity 'British' is what makes this already widely cited book noteworthy. The individual authors' willingness to explore an apparent monolithic collective identity, and to show its internal differentiations, is significant, because, for one reason, it points out a new direction for the archaeology of the modern world.

The collected papers were originally presented in two separate sessions in places that have had special historical relationships with people broadly considered British—Cape

Town and Quebec. The first session was delivered as part of the World Archaeological Congress in 1999, and the publication appears as Volume 46 of the WAC's One World Archaeology series. This volume is true to the One World Archaeology series in that it addresses issues of leading-edge archaeological import that have wide temporal, historical and geographic significance. The book consists of 16 case studies exploring what it means to be British and how its attached materiality can be identified and interpreted using archaeological sources of information.

The linked concepts of empire and imperialism extend throughout the volume in myriad ways, and to foreground this linkage, the editor has divided the papers into two sections, 'The First Empire: 1600–1800' and 'The Second Empire: 1800–1945'. At first glance, this division appears to run counter to the book's stated aims of historical recontextualization without artificial segmentation. Perhaps its usage here merely represents an editorial convention, but it is nonetheless interesting to note that the chapters in 'The First Empire', with the exception of one on Ireland, all focus on England itself. The chapters in 'The Second Empire' focus on those places colonized by the 'British'. Australia is represented by two papers, and Wales, Scotland, South Africa, Cyprus, Quebec and Sri Lanka are each the subject of one chapter.

The impetus for the authors' research derives from the argument of some historians that Britishness is an invented tradition that has arisen from the political juxtaposition of English, Irish, Welsh and Scottish identities. This understanding stands against the notion that Britishness stems from an acculturative blending of peoples into a creolized whole. The proposition is especially intriguing given that many archaeologists currently examining early colonial history are now relying on a creolization model that foregrounds transcultural adaptation over invented tradition. Each model probably has relevance in specific socio-historical contexts, but the argument that Britishness is a composite created from other traditions raises the specter that its constituent parts also might be considered composite images. One question thus looms large here. Is an inherent danger of this perspective on the artificiality of identity to devolve historical archaeology into a purely particularistic pursuit, where no entities larger than the household are given merit, because all other identities are considered artificial? The utter misrepresentation of a global perspective for historical archaeology as totalizing and non-contextual, presented in the 'Concluding Comments' of this book, certainly raises this possibility. The crude attempt to discredit a broad, global perspective, however, does not diminish the importance of this book. The authors of the chapters make successful arguments for deconstructing created identity. One of the most intriguing elements of the book, but certainly nothing new to archaeologists who have experience examining colonialism, is the penetration of Britishness into the world. In this sense, a corollary with race is useful. Just because 'race' does not exist as a biological reality does not mean that its effects—as a perceived human characteristic—had no impact on human life. The same may be said of Britishness. Its rise after 1707, as a politico-historical creation, is less important than the impact that perceived Britishness has had on the world. As such, like race or Eurocentrism, it can be a legitimate and profitable topic of study, even though one not need agree with its tenets or outlook.

One weakness of the book, and one that plagues much theoretical historical archaeology, is the lack of clear linkage between the overarching theme, Britishness, and its material dimensions. Only five of the chapters (just over 30 percent) discuss Britishness in terms of portable material culture (four with ceramics, one with gravestones). The rest of the authors

consider larger cultural units, like landscapes and standing buildings. Non-artefactual examples such as those presented here continue to constitute a contentious feature of much archaeological research. A reliance on mega-artefacts for our theoretical pronouncements has led many observers, myself included, to argue that the purview of historical archaeology includes more than simply artefacts. We should not put ourselves into a position where we can legitimately examine only portable objects. Still, the general inability of archaeologists to demonstrate a clear association between created identity and the material objects used by individuals so identified, represents a constant and as yet largely insurmountable obstacle for the discipline.

This collection of essays has clearly not solved the knotty problem of correlating artefacts with past identity, nor should we expect it to do so. What this collection does accomplish, however, is to commence an important line of inquiry that undoubtedly will be taken up by many historical archaeologists across the globe, just as it should be. This volume is a success in pointing this new direction, and it is a must read for all historical archaeologists intent on social analysis.

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Butcher, M. and Y.M.J. Collins (eds), *Bendigo at Work: An Industrial History*. Holland House, Bendigo, Victoria, 2005; x + 266 pages; hardback; ISBN 0 9586073 8 9.

Bendigo at Work is sub-titled 'An Industrial History', and so of course it is—but a long way from drab lists of board members and AGMs. Several chapters provide site detail, work processes, relics and other archaeological data, others emphasise social, health and labour issues, so that overall it is firmly cross-disciplinary.

In fact the richness of what this book has to offer grows steadily on the reader, since it does not entice with large colour plates and easy-read print. Persistence reveals a breadth and depth of coverage of Bendigo's industrial past that is totally absorbing; the amount of information to be found in this book is considerable, especially since several authors extend their coverage with lists identifying additional industrial sites around greater Bendigo.

Nineteen authors present 24 chapters, and well demonstrate the value of this type of collaboration. Individual chapters cover mining, foundries, explosives and ordnance, gas, electricity and water, transport in many forms, brewing, building materials, textiles and sewing machines, abattoirs and tanning, eucalyptus oil, vines and tobacco. Each chapter is well-referenced with end-notes, and there is a useful sectionalized bibliography. Each discipline brings its own context whether more site-based and archaeological; more text-based and historical; or more people, women, and welfare based. The Introduction points out that individual chapters will form a basis for more developed later studies. As it stands they have already made a comprehensive start, presenting and bringing to life a grand range of Bendigo's past industries. Much of the texture in the chapters derives from the variety of sources used. Simple accounts of work premises often shift to direct contemporary press quotations and reference to workers' conditions and accidents.

This reviewer has warm memories of just some of Bendigo's industrial past and interesting surviving works and structures, and many of these chapters are appealing. James Lerk on Mining Heritage reveals a breadth of technological

knowledge, sites and local events, weaving together past history and present condition in a masterly narrative. Yolande Collins on textiles demonstrates the social significance of the Hanro factory to Bendigo. Mike Butcher covers the fuse factories (special favourites), tanning, and tobacco, and joins Iain Stuart to look at building materials—bricks, stone, lime and cement—with an excellent presentation of brick marks, then Brian Rhule to look at the breweries. The weightier chapters on power and various forms of transport are rich in technical detail, historic illustrations and contemporaneous accounts; the modest rural chapters—especially the eucalyptus distilleries—have their own special archaeological interest.

In all these industries the processes and changes in technology are (for many of us) as compelling as the rise and fall of individual businesses, and at times the reader regrets the lack of some of this detail. The site plans and flow charts dear to most archaeological readers are predictably sparse—Geoff Russell's chapter on the Coliban Water Supply scheme is an exception—since the coverage of most chapters is non site-specific. In general the device of numerous small illustrations rather than fewer large set-pieces works well and the selection of images in each chapter tends to reflect the author's particular viewpoints. In most chapters these small black and white images are sharp, but some still tend to be budget in quality.

Updates are also included on recent accidents at—or demolitions of—some individual historic structures described in the text. These last cool appraisals remind us as always how physically vulnerable such industrial survivals are, despite the fact they are loaded with social meaning and the working hours of countless employees. This book indicates something of how far the recognition and conservation of industrial heritage has travelled, both forward and backward, since the 1970s and 1980s.

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Stanbury, M. (ed.), *The Barque Eglinton, wrecked Western Australia 1852: The history of its loss, archaeological excavation, artefact catalogue and interpretation*. Australian National Centre of Excellence for Maritime Archaeology Special Publication No 6, The Australasian Institute for Maritime Archaeology Special Publication No 13, 2003; 233 pages; 109 figures. \$35.00 from the W.A. Museum Bookshop, 47 Cliff Street Fremantle or Western Australian Museum Website <www.mm.wa.gov.au>.

The Barque *Eglinton* on its first voyage to Western Australia made a somewhat calamitous landfall on the night of 6 September 1852. Typically, a serious navigation error was involved as well as some ill-timed celebrations of the impending landfall. The *Eglinton* struck a series of reefs north of Fremantle. The wrecking was relatively gentle with much of the ship's structure remaining intact after the initial impact and gradually collapsing in the following days. The ship appears to have broken up as pieces of the ship's structure were reported to have floated away. Salvage of the ship and its cargo continued until early October 1852.

Thereafter the wreck gradually settled onto the coastal limestone that forms part of the local reef. In 1971 the wreck was discovered by skindivers and the West Australian Museum undertook three seasons of fieldwork on the site as a training exercise. The excavation directors were Jeremy Green and Graham Henderson. Some 2819 artefacts, including an anchor, were raised; most have been conserved and stored at the West Australian Museum where a few are on display.

Coming over thirty years since the initial excavations, the book is in itself something of a salvage exercise for little was published on the *Eglinton* and the museum staff commenced their renowned work on the Dutch VOC shipwrecks immediately after the field seasons on the *Eglinton*. Myra Stanbury points out the *Eglinton* was an important trading vessel coming to Fremantle and the Swan River colony and the remains of its cargo are of importance as indicators of colonial trade patterns, the nature of immigration and the technology of ships.

Stanbury has attempted to bring together historical information about the wreck itself, colonial trade into Western Australia and the archaeological excavations (now history in themselves). She has also provided a well-illustrated catalogue of finds that will, I think, serve as an important reference for maritime and land archaeologists.

There are inevitably a few niggles. Chapter 6 discusses material relating to the *Eglinton* itself. Clearly not much of the ship's structure was excavated, but there were some items of interest recovered, including 1260 clay building bricks (none of which are illustrated) The chapter itself ends without a concluding summary which could have put all the finds into the broader context of shipping and ship technology.

A similar approach is taken with the chapters covering the ship's cargo (Chapters 7–11) although in Chapter 12 there is a discussion and interpretation of the cargo. This takes the form of a discussion of research themes raised earlier in the book. Many of these questions are discussed without any reference to the collection of artefacts and, at times, the artefacts seem to be superfluous to the discussion. I wonder though whether this is an inherent problem of a collection excavated without any research design and analysed many years later.

To conclude, there are too many excavations which remain unpublished and gather dust. Myra Stanbury and her co-authors Graeme Henderson, Karen Miller, Michael McCarthy, Dena Garratt and Sarah Kenderdine are to be congratulated in exhuming the archaeology of the *Eglinton* and publishing it in a neatly presented, well set out book, with copious illustrations (except of the bricks). I hope that their work stimulates further work on the collection and on the issues regarding trade into Western Australia raised in this book.

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Hall, M. and S. W. Silliman (eds), *Historical Archaeology*. Blackwell Studies in Global Archaeology, Malden, MA, 2006; xvii + 341 pages; paperback; ISBN-13: 978-1-4051-0751-8. US\$39.95.

Historical Archaeology is the latest in a series of new titles published by Blackwell in the 'Blackwell Studies in Global Archaeology' series. Hall and Silliman draw together an impressive set of papers which provides both a comprehensive summary of the field for students, and a challenging agenda and direction for practitioners of historical archaeology in the Western World.

The book is divided into three sections with an overall introduction. Part 1 'Dimensions of Practice' is concerned with different academic approaches to global historical archaeology. Stephen A. Mrozowski outlines biological and physical environmental approaches to historical archaeology, delineating the ways in which archaeologists have engaged with, and contributed to, environmental studies of the impacts and consequences of colonialism in the New World. Patricia

Galloway's contribution concerns material culture and text, drawing on actor-network theory (particularly the work of Latour) to illustrate practices of knowledge construction and the ways in which the construction of knowledge operates in the fields of human-object relations. Elizabeth Pauls considers the place of space and landscape studies in global historical archaeology, while Palus, Leone and Cochran's paper on critical approaches to historical archaeology, and the ideological content of historical archaeological scholarship, completes this first section.

The second part of the book, 'Themes in Interpretation', explores approaches to gender (Voss), ideology (Burke), labour (Silliman), confinement and institutionalisation (De Cunzo) and class (Wurst). As Hall and Silliman point out in their short yet impressive introduction to the volume, the papers in this part of the book raise a number of sub-themes which are revisited in the papers in the final part of the volume, including issues of scale and interpretation, agency, materiality, meaning, identity formation and representation.

The third and final part of the book, 'World Systems and local living', introduces a number of papers which highlight the intersection of the local and the global, each with a specific regional focus. There is a strong emphasis in this part of the book on the use of specific case studies to illustrate the broader issues in the historical archaeology of the modern world. Pedro Funari's paper concerns the historical archaeology of Latin America; Innocent Pikirayi outlines the historical archaeology of Africa; Diana DiPaolo Loren and Mary Beaudry focus on eastern North America and Kent Lightfoot on western North America; Jane Lydon outlines the historical archaeology of the Pacific; and Matthew Johnson

completes this section with a chapter on the historical archaeology of Europe.

Unlike many general academic texts on historical archaeology, this volume is truly global in its approach to the subject. In addition to Lydon's impressive and thoughtful overview of the historical archaeology of the Pacific, many of the authors draw on Australian case studies and the Australian historical archaeological literature in their reviews. This is not only an indicator of how thorough the authors and editors have been in pulling together a comparative collection of papers, but also on the growing importance of Australia in historical archaeology as a discipline.

In my opinion, this is currently the best general academic text on historical archaeology which is available on the international market. The papers have been thoughtfully chosen and critically edited to provide a comprehensive overview of the topic. The breadth of both the geographic regions and the theoretical areas covered is impressive. Unlike many general texts which sacrifice critical discussion for an undemanding read, this book provides both an easy reference for those who want a broad overview of the field as well as a critical and lively summary of the current areas of debate. This book belongs in the libraries of all students and practitioners of historical archaeology, and should stand as a reference point for many years to come.

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